

generation. When this came to the fore, IIE acted and started the Syrian Consortium for Higher Education and then PEER, in a larger effort to think globally about how we improve access for displaced Syrian students to higher education."

PEER has two goals, Miller said. The first is an online clearinghouse of some 700 opportunities for displaced students to find scholarships and language learning and, secondly, "to provide a survey of the landscape as to who is doing what."

"When students have a pathway to higher education they are more apt to stay in primary and secondary school," Miller explained, "because they see an avenue toward a larger goal." She pointed out that when students don't have access to higher education, but desire it, the boys are more apt to fall toward extremism and the girls toward early marriage. "I would love to see education cease to be a development concern," she concluded, "and finally considered a humanitarian concern."

The panelists all agreed that the number one action needed to help Syrians and Syrian refugees is to end the war and the daily bombings.

—Elaine Pasquini

Lebanese Women Celebrate a Lebanese Poet and Each Other

Dima Osseiran hosted a Nov. 7 luncheon at her Potomac, MD home attended by more than 50 notable women of Lebanese heritage. They were celebrating the arrival of Dima's mother, Shahina Osseiran, en route to a ceremony in honor of her father, prominent Lebanese poet and scholar, Jawdat R. Haydar (1905-2006), at North Texas University in Denton. The English department unveiled a plaque and announced an annual prize in his name. Haydar (whose books are available from Middle East Books and More) wrote that his greatest wish was for "Humanity to one day learn to be at peace with its environment, for violence and pollution to come to an end."

The Osseiran luncheon also became an impromptu celebration of some extraordinary Lebanese women in atten-



Lebanese women have much to celebrate.

dance. Carla Jazzar, Lebanese chargé d'affaires in Washington, DC, has been an effective acting ambassador since the departure of Ambassador Antoine Chedid in January 2016. Also in attendance was Lebanon's newly appointed U.N. ambassador, Dr. Amal Mudallali, who graduated from the American University of Beirut with a degree in political sciences, and earned another degree in political communication from the University of Maryland in the U.S. (Lebanon has appointed other women as ambassadors recently, including Tracy Chamoun, granddaughter of late president Camille Chamoun, now Lebanon's ambassador to Jordan, and journalist Sahar Baassiri, who was appointed as Lebanon's ambassador to UNESCO. They were not at the luncheon.) As Jazzar and Mudallali cut a cake inscribed, "Your image shall e'er be in our mind. Honored and acclaimed by all the nation. J.R. Haydar," the women raised their glasses to acknowledge the growing power of Lebanese women. —Delinda C. Hanley

NCUSAR Hosts 26th Annual U.S.-Arab Policymakers Conference

The National Council on U.S.-Arab Relations hosted its 26th annual U.S.-Arab Policymakers Conference Oct. 18 and 19. The two-day conference included panels on such topics as "Energy Dynamics of U.S.-Arab Relations," "Arab-U.S. Defense Cooperation," and "Arab-U.S. Relations: Where Are We Going?"

The first day's keynote speech was delivered by Gen. Joseph L. Votel, commander of the United States Central Command. The general began by stating

that the Middle East, Central and South Asia "remains an area of extraordinary importance to the United States" and that "it will remain an important area for us in the future." With all the challenges and unknown future in the region, General Votel said that three words—Prepare, Pursue, Prevail—make up a "very simple approach that we use in thinking about this region." Citing the relationship between the U.S. and the UAE in Yemen, joint counterterrorism goals, as well as U.S. support for governments opposing Iran, General Votel characterized American goals as "local solutions to local problems, and U.S. assistance where and when our interests are affected."

The second day of the conference opened up with a talk by Dr. Ahmed Awad bin Mubarak, ambassador of the Republic of Yemen to the United States. The ambassador stated that he is "still optimistic" about his country's future despite the "dire situation on the ground"—which, he said, is "not as complicated as Syria." During the question-and-answer period, Ambassador Mubarak described the situation in Yemen as not a conflict between Saudi Arabia vs. Yemen, north vs. south, or Sunni vs. Shi'i, but one of a legitimate government versus militias.

That day's keynote speech was delivered by HRH Prince Turki Al Faisal Al-Saud, former Saudi ambassador to the UK and the U.S. Prince Turki explained that the Arab world is "facing immense challenges, some of which are in our hands to solve, but others, unfortunately, are in the hands of others." He went on to say that "governments must respond